

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A server computer for electronically introducing merchandise information after closing an electrical auction, said server computer connected through a network to a plurality of terminals, which participate in an auction, said server computer comprising:

5 a merchandise database storing a plurality of merchandise information;

means for selecting merchandise information from said merchandise database on a basis of provided bid information of a participant; and

means for causing to notify the selected merchandise information as alternative merchandise information to a terminal.

10 2. The server computer of claim 1, wherein said selecting means comprises:

means for extracting preference information on a basis of stored bid information of a bidder and exhibited merchandise information bid on by the bidder; and

means for selecting merchandise information on a basis of the preference information.

15 3. The server computer of claim 1, wherein said selecting means selects the merchandise information except for a successful bidder.

4. A server computer for electronically introducing merchandise information after closing an electrical auction, said server computer connected through a network to a plurality of terminals which participate in an auction, said server computer comprising:

an auction execution unit configured to hold an electronic auction, said auction

20 execution unit comprising,

a providing module configured to provide exhibited merchandise information for the auction to the terminals, and

a receiving module configured to receive bid information, which includes bid information indicating a bidder from the terminals and configured to store the bid

25 information;

a merchandise database storing a plurality of merchandise information;

means for selecting merchandise information from the merchandise database on a basis of the stored bid information of a bidder; and

means for causing to notify the selected merchandise information as alternative

merchandise information to a terminal.

5. The server computer of claim 4, wherein said selecting means comprises:

means for extracting preference information on a basis of bid information stored for a bidder and the exhibited merchandise information bid on by the bidder, and

5 means for selecting merchandise information on a basis of the preference information.

6. The server computer of claim 4, wherein said selecting means selects the merchandise information except for a successful bidder.

7. A server computer for electronically introducing merchandise information after closing an electrical auction, said server computer connected through a network to a plurality

10 of terminals which participate in the auction, said server computer comprising:

means for extracting preference information on a basis of bid information stored for a bidder and exhibited merchandise information bid on by the bidder;

means for causing a communication unit to transmit the preference information to an exhibitor.

15 8. The server computer of claim 7, wherein said extracting means extracts the merchandise information except for a successful bidder.

9. A server computer for electronically introducing merchandise information after closing an electrical auction, said server computer connected through a network to a plurality of terminals which participate in the auction, said server computer comprising:

20 a storage unit storing bid information;

means for extracting preference information on the basis of bid information stored for a bidder and exhibited merchandise information bid on by the bidder;

means for associating the preference information and bid information and for storing same;

25 means for receiving alternative merchandise information selected by an exhibitor;

means for causing to notify the alternative merchandise information as alternative merchandise to a terminal on a basis of the associated preference information and bid information.

10. The server computer of claim 9, wherein said extracting means extracts the

merchandise information except for a successful bidder.

11. A server computer for electronically introducing merchandise information after closing an electrical auction, said server computer connected through a network to a plurality of terminals which participate in the auction, said server computer comprising:

5 means for extracting preference information on a basis of bid information stored for a bidder and exhibited merchandise information bid on by the bidder;

means for causing a communication unit to transmit the preference information to an exhibitor;

means for receiving alternative merchandise information selected by the exhibitor;

10 means for causing to notify the alternative merchandise information as alternative merchandise to a terminal.

12. A server computer for electronically introducing merchandise information after closing an electrical auction, said server computer connected through a network to a plurality of terminals which participate in the auction, said server computer comprising:

15 means for holding the auction electronically,

said auction holding means, comprising,

means for providing exhibited merchandise information for the auction to the terminals, and

20 means for receiving bid information, which includes information indicating a bidder, from the terminals and for storing the bid information;

means for extracting preference information on a basis of bid information stored for a bidder and exhibited merchandise information bid on by the bidder;

means for causing a communication unit to transmit the preference information to an exhibitor;

25 means for receiving alternative merchandise information selected by the exhibitor;

means for causing to notify the alternative merchandise information as alternative merchandise to the terminal.

13. A method of electronically introducing merchandise information to a participant bidding in an electronic auction after closing the electronic auction, in a system including a

server computer connected through a network to a plurality of terminals which participate in the auction, said method comprising:

selecting merchandise information from a plurality of merchandise information on a basis of bid information bid by a participant; and

5 causing to transmit the selected merchandise information as alternative merchandise to a terminal of the participant.

14. The method of claim 13, wherein said selecting step comprises:

extracting preference information on a basis of the bid information and exhibited merchandise information bid on by the participant; and

10 selecting the merchandise information on a basis of the preference information from the plurality of merchandise information.

15. A method of electronically introducing merchandise information after closing an electronic auction, comprising:

providing exhibited merchandise information for the auction to terminals of participants,

15 receiving bid information, which includes information indicating each participant from the terminals;

storing the bid information;

20 selecting merchandise information from a plurality of merchandise information on a basis of the stored bid information; and

causing to transmit the selected merchandise information as alternative merchandise to a terminal of a participant.

16. The method of claim 15, wherein said selecting step comprises:

extracting preference information on a basis of the bid information and exhibited

25 merchandise information bid on by a participant; and

selecting merchandise information on a basis of the preference information from the plurality of merchandise information.

17. A method of electronically introducing merchandise information to a participant bidding in an electronic auction after closing the auction, comprising:

- extracting preference information on a basis of bid information and exhibited merchandise information bid on by a participant;
- causing to transmit the preference information to a terminal of an exhibitor.
18. A method of electronically introducing merchandise information after closing an electrical auction, comprising:
- 5       storing bid information;
- extracting preference information on a basis of bid information stored for a bidder and exhibited merchandise information bid on by the bidder;
- associating the preference information and bid information and storing same;
- 10      receiving alternative merchandise information selected by an exhibitor; and
- causing to notify the alternative merchandise information as alternative merchandise to a terminal on a basis of the associated preference information and bid information.
- 15      19. A computer program product comprising a computer storage medium having a computer program code mechanism embedded in the computer storage medium configured to perform the steps recited in any one of Claims 13-18.
- 20      20. An auction system, comprising:
- a plurality of terminals offering bids for exhibited merchandise information in an electronic auction; and
- a server computer connected the plurality of terminals through a network, configured to hold the auction, said server, including,
- 25      a providing module providing exhibited merchandise information to the terminals,
- a receiving module receiving bid information, which includes information indicating a bidder from the terminals and storing the bid information;
- a merchandise database storing a plurality of merchandise information;
- 20      means for selecting merchandise information from the merchandise database on a basis of stored bid information for a bidder; and
- means for causing to notify the selected merchandise information as alternative merchandise to a terminal of the bidder.

21. An auction system, comprising:

a plurality of terminals offering a bid on exhibited merchandise information;

a terminal of an exhibitor; and

a server computer, connected the plurality of terminals and the terminal of the

5 exhibitor through a network, and configured to hold an auction, said server, including,

means for providing exhibited merchandise information for the auction to the

terminals, and

means for receiving bid information, which includes information indicating a bidder from the terminals and for storing the bid information,

10 means for extracting preference information on a basis of the stored bid

information of the bidder, and the exhibited merchandise information bid on by the

bidder;

means for causing a communication unit to transmit a preference information to the exhibitor;

15 means for receiving an alternative merchandise information selected by

exhibitor;

means for causing to notify the alternative merchandise information as an alternative merchandise to the terminal.